

Why Study Germany?
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In 1683 the first German immigrants arrived in America. Two hundred years later, thousands were working as miners, investors, assayers, brewers and bakers throughout Idaho. By the 1880's, German setters were in nearly every Idaho community: Coeur d'Alene, Bonners Ferry, Rathdrum, Post Falls (named after German immigrant Fredrick Post), Moscow, Leland, Kendrick, Council, American Falls, Blackfoot, Rexburg, Soda Springs; few Idaho communities would be left off an inclusive list. In 1910 Boise's German population alone was approximately 6,000 and four years later, Idaho elected our nation's first Jewish governor, German-born Moses Alexander.

Today, over 25% of Idahoan's can trace their family histories back to Germany. Given Idaho's German immigrant past, the following International Education lessons have been created to provide our students the opportunity to build on our shared history and make modern day connections... connections that will be increasingly important in their lives as citizens of Idaho and of the world.

Graduates of Idaho high schools need to understand the challenges and opportunities they face as they compete in the ever-shrinking world of globalization. In the past ten years, Idaho has seen a 60% increase in trade with Germany and employers now search for skilled workers well beyond state, national or continental borders. Students will also be encouraged to develop respect and empathy for others and see the increasing interdependence of our human family as they work to become global citizens. These challenges exist not only in Idaho, but also in Germany.

Germany has experienced a significant increase in the number of foreign workers who have decided to permanently settle in Germany, not unlike Idaho's growing Latino population. Consequently, the cultural and ethnic demographic "snapshot" of what many think to be "typical" of Germany or Idaho has changed. As a result schools need a new curriculum to teach the lessons of inclusion, tolerance and acceptance, and to combat anti-Semitism, xenophobia, violence and negative stereotyping. Our challenge as teachers is to educate the youth of Idaho to understand their responsibilities in helping to secure these rights for everyone and to successfully participate, compete and prosper in a global economic market.